Minutes

International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes

Subcommittee on the taxonomy of the Halobacteriaceae

Minutes of the meetings, 25 July 2005, San Francisco, CA, USA

Session 1 – Closed meeting

Minute 1. Call to order. The closed meeting was held on 25 July 2005, at the Moscone Convention Center, San Francisco, CA, USA. The chairman, Dr A. Ventosa, opened the meeting at 14:05.

Minute 2. Record of attendance. The members present were Drs A. Ventosa (Chairman), A. Oren (Secretary), C. D. Litchfield, H. Stan-Lotter, B. J. Tindall and R. H. Vreeland. Apologies were received from R. R. Colwell, M. L. Dyall-Smith, W. D. Grant, M. Kamekura, Y. Ma and F. Rodriguez-Valera.

Minute 3. Approval of agenda. The agenda of the meeting was approved.

Minute 4. Minutes of the previous meeting. The minutes of the meetings held in Ljubljana, Slovenia, 5 September 2004 [Oren & Ventosa, Int J Syst Evol Microbiol 55 (2005), 543–544], were approved.

Minute 5. Changes in officers and membership. A. Ventosa and A. Oren were unanimously re-elected for another 6-year term as Chairman and Secretary, respectively. R. Montalvo-Rodriguez (Mayaguez, Puerto-Rico) was nominated as a possible candidate member of the subcommittee. The Secretary will formally invite Dr Montalvo-Rodriguez to join the subcommittee at its next meeting.

Minute 6. Current membership. The current membership of the subcommittee is as follows: A. Ventosa (Seville, Spain) (Chairman), A. Oren (Jerusalem, Israel) (Secretary), R. R. Colwell (Baltimore, MD, USA), M. L. Dyall-Smith (Melbourne, Australia), W. D. Grant (Leicester, UK), M. Kamekura (Noda, Japan), C. D. Litchfield (Manassas, VA, USA), Y. Ma (Beijing, China), F. Rodriguez-Valera (Alicante, Spain), H. Stan-Lotter (Salzburg, Austria), B. J. Tindall (Braunschweig, Germany) and R. H. Vreeland (West Chester, PA, USA).

Minute 7. Next meeting of the subcommittee. The next meeting of the subcommittee will be held in association with the international meeting on halophilic microorganisms, scheduled to take place in Essex, UK, in 2007.

Session 2 – Open meeting

Minute 9. Call to order. The open meeting was held on 25 July 2005, at the Moscone Convention Center, San Francisco, CA, USA. The chairman, Dr A. Ventosa, opened the meeting at 15:50.

Minute 10. Record of attendance. The subcommittee members present at the closed meeting also attended the open meeting. In addition, the meeting was attended by T. Itoh (Wako, Saitama, Japan), R. Montalvo-Rodriguez (Mayaguez, Puerto-Rico) and P. Pesenti (Fairfax, VA, USA).

Minute 11. New taxa. Reports on the following new taxa and reclassification of existing taxa were presented.


Natrinema altunense sp. nov. [Xu et al., Int J Syst Evol Microbiol 55 (2005), 1311–1314], with type strain AS 1.3731T, JCM 12890T.

Halobiforma lacisalsi sp. nov. [Xu et al., Int J Syst Evol Microbiol 55 (2005), 1949–1952], with type strain CGMCC 1.3738T, JCM 12983T.

The name Halobacterium noricense sp. nov. [Gruber et al., Extremophiles 8 (2004), 431–439], with type strain DSM 15987T, ATCC BAA-852T, NCIMB 13967T, has been validly published [Validation List no. 103, Int J Syst Evol Microbiol 55 (2005), 983–985].

**Natronolimnobius baerhuensis** [Itoh et al., *Extremophiles* 9 (2005), 111–116], with type strain CGMCC 1.3597^T^, JCM 12253^T^.

**Natronolimnobius innermongolicus** [Itoh et al., *Extremophiles* 9 (2005), 111–116], with type strain CGMCC 1.2124^T^, JCM 12255^T^.


**Minute 12. Report of the ad-hoc committee for the identification of genes relevant for multilocus gene comparison studies.** Following the discussions in Ljubljana the following ad-hoc committee was appointed: Masahiro Kamekura (Noda, Japan; Chairman), Charles Daniels (Ohio State University), Shiladitya DasSarma (Baltimore), Ford Doolittle (Halifax), Mike Dyall-Smith (Melbourne) and Brian Tindall (Braunschweig). The secretary read a letter received from M. Kamekura on 5 May 2005, stating that no progress has been made yet. B. J. Tindall provided further explanations. The secretary will call upon Dr Kamekura to activate the ad-hoc committee and to report to the subcommittee at its next meeting.

**Minute 13. Culture collections of halophilic prokaryotes.** R. H. Vreeland explained that ‘private’ culture collections of *Halobacteriaceae* exist in many laboratories all over the world, including those of the subcommittee members. In order to preserve this diversity of cultures, Dr Vreeland volunteered to set up a database with an inventory of the strains maintained in these ‘private’ collections, their origin and their properties. The subcommittee thanked Dr Vreeland for this important initiative.

**Minute 14.** C. D. Litchfield notified the subcommittee that Fredrick J. Post, who had made extensive studies of the halophilic micro-organisms of Great Salt Lake, Utah, had passed away on 2 April 2004.

**Minute 15.** A. Oren read a letter received on 21 July 2005 from Shiladitya DasSarma, explaining differences in different strains belonging to the genus *Halobacterium*. The subcommittee members present discussed these points with interest.

**Minute 16. Minimal standards update.** B. J. Tindall noted that it would be opportune to modify and update the Proposed Minimal Standards for the Description of New Taxa in the Order *Halobacteriales* [Oren et al., *Int J Syst Bacteriol* 47 (1997), 233–238]. A number of the subcommittee members are also members of the Subcommittee on the Family *Halomonadaceae*, where a document on minimal standards is also being prepared. Similar principles apply to the theoretical and methodological approaches to the characterization and classification of these two groups and it was concluded that an interaction between the two subcommittees would be productive. Changes in the scope of data collected, as well as the way these data may be interpreted, mean that it would be helpful to provide a document which reflects these changes. It was decided that the subcommittee, coordinated by the chairman A. Ventosa, will prepare a new version of the Minimal Standards.

**Minute 17. Next meeting of the subcommittee.** The next international meeting on halophilic micro-organisms is scheduled to take place in Essex, UK, in 2007. The subcommittee discussed the benefits of holding a joint open meeting with the Subcommittee on the Family *Halomonadaceae*. It was generally concluded that this would be a good idea.

**Minute 18. Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 16:50 on 25 July 2005.